

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CAIRO 05301 171221Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-08 /102 W
-----066732 171224Z /13

P 171212Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5659
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 05301

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, SO,KE, ET, EG

SUBJECT: KENYAN/EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT INCIDENTS

REF: (A) STATE 41256, (B) CAIRO 5084, (C) NAIROBI 2487,

- (D) CAIRO 5198

1. AT IRANIAN AMBASSADOR'S FAREWELL DINNER LAST EVENING, I HAD OPPORTUNITY DISCUSS KENYAN/EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT INCIDENTS WITH ACTING FONMIN BOUTROS GHALI. TOLD HIM THAT WE HAD AS YET RECEIVED NO RESPONSE TO GHALI'S EARLIER REQUEST FOR USG INTERCESSION WITH KENYANS TO RELEASE IMPOUNDED EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT. KENYANS HAD INFORMED US, HOWEVER, THAT EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT WAS CARRYING MILITARY SUPPLIES TO SOMALIA AND DID NOT HAVE OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCE. KENYANS HAD ALSO STATED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SEVERAL PREVIOUS UNAUTHORIZED EGYPTIAN OVERFLIGHTS AND THAT THEY HAD WARNED GOE THAT THEY COULD NOT ACCEPT SUCH OVERFLIGHTS. I MADE A POINT OF NOTING THAT NONE OF THESE POINTS HAD BEEN MENTIONED IN GHALI'S DEMARCHE TO DCM MATTHEWS. HOWEVER, IF THESE KENYAN CLAIMS CORRECT, HE WOULD APPRECIATE THAT IT MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR USG TO ASSIST. I ALSO EXPRESSED SOME PERSONAL SURPRISE AT GOE
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 05301 171221Z

ACTION IN IMPOUNDING TWO KENYAN COMMERCIAL AIRLINERS EN ROUTE BETWEEN NAIROBI AND LONDON.

2. GHALI CANDIDLY STATED THAT HE WAS EMBARRASSED ABOUT THE WHOLE AFFAIR. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT KENYANS HAD WARNED GOE AFTER SEVERAL UNAUTHORIZED EGYPTIAN OVERFLIGHTS. AS RESULT, HE HAD URGED THAT NO FURTHER FLIGHTS TAKE PLACE

UNLESS AND UNTIL KENYAN CLEARANCES OBTAINED. HIS COUNSEL HAD BEEN DISREGARDED, HOWEVER, AND THE PRIMIN AND GAMASY HAD ORDERED THE FLIGHTS. THEY HAD DONE SO ON SADAT'S EXPRESS INSTRUCTIONS THAT AN EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO RESPOND TO SOMALI PRESIDENT SIAD BARRE'S MOST RECENT URGENT REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL MILITARY SUPPLIES. ACTING ON THOSE INSTRUCTIONS, GAMASY HAD ORDERED THE FLIGHTS TO PROCEED.

3. GHALI ALSO EXPRESSED PERSONAL UNHAPPINESS ABOUT THE SEIZURE OF THE TWO KENYAN COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT. THIS TOO HAD BEEN ORDERED BY PRIMIN SALEM AND GAMASY IN ORDER TO PRESSURE THE KENYAN GOVT TO RELEASE THE IMPOUNDED EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT. IT WAS NOT, IN GHALI'S VIEW, THE PROPER WAY TO DEAL WITH ANOTHER AFRICAN STATE. AS SOON AS HE HAD HEARD ABOUT THE IMPOUNDING OF THE KENYAN AIRCRAFT, HE HAD VOICED HIS OBJECTIONS TO THE PRIMIN AND GAMASY, BUT HAD BEEN OVERRULED. FOR MOST OF THE DAY HE HAD SOUGHT TO NEGOTIATE THE RELEASE OF THE EGYPTIAN AND KENYAN AIRCRAFT AND HAD HAD A TELEPHONE CALL FROM EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR IN NAIROBI INDICATING KENYAN WILLINGNESS TO RELEASE THE EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT ON CONDITION THAT THE TWO KENYAN AIRCRAFT WERE BEING RELEASED. HE WAS STILL WAITING FOR CONFIRMATION THAT THIS WAS INDEED THE KENYAN POSITION (REF D).

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 CAIRO 05301 171221Z

4. LATER DURING THE DINNER UK AMBASSADOR MORRIS, TO WHOM GHALI HAD ALSO ADDRESSED REQUEST FOR CONFIRMATION OF REPORTED KENYAN WILLINGNESS TO RELEASE EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT, RECEIVED A MESSAGE CONFIRMING THIS ON UNDERSTANDING KENYAN AIRCRAFT WOULD ALSO BE RELEASED. GHALI INFORMED GAMASY AND KENYAN AIRCRAFT WERE RELEASED LATE LAST EVENING. EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT AND CARGO ALSO ARRIVED CAIRO IN THE COURSE OF THE NIGHT.

5. REF A RECEIVED AFTER MY CONVERSATION WITH GHALI LAST EVENING. SINCE THE AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN RELEASED, THERE SEEMS LITTLE PURPOSE IN MENTIONING TO GHALI MOST OF THE POINTS CITED REF A. I WILL, HOWEVER, TAKE APPROPRIATE OCCASION TO BRIEF HIM ON KENYAN CONCERNS ABOUT HORN OF AFRICA SITUATION. I AM SURE THAT HE ALREADY KNOWS THEM, BUT IT MAY BE WORTH REPEATING TO AVOID A FUTURE INCIDENT. EILTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIRCRAFT DETENTION, AIRSPACE VIOLATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CAIRO05301
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780073-0945
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780243/aaaabkdt.tel
Line Count: 111
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a8ffa2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 41256, 78 CAIRO 5084, 78 NAIROBI 2487
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3565635
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KENYAN/EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT INCIDENTS
TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, SO, KE, ET, EG
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a8ffa2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014